
BEAR FACTS

Planning Trends and Information for California State Parks

February 2002

The New California Park and Recreation Master Plan: We Are On Our Way

The California Department of Parks and Recreation has begun the development of a new California Park and Recreation Master Plan. The need for a "master plan" grew out of Director Rusty Areia's efforts to create a vision for the future of parks in California. The plan will also satisfy the federal requirements regarding the need for the State to prepare a California Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP). The last such plan was prepared in 1993.

The first step in developing the Master Plan was recently taken with the establishment of a Master Plan Advisory Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to advise the Department on the planning processes to be used in developing the plan and to review draft elements of the plan as they are prepared by department staff and outside consultants. The fourteen-member Committee includes representatives from a broad spectrum of park and recreation stakeholders. The first meeting of the Committee was held on December 6, 2001 at Old Sacramento SHP and served to clarify the purpose of the plan and identify key issues which will lead to specific actions for enhancing recreation opportunities statewide.

Another element of the plan will include a statewide survey to assess public opinions and
(continued on page 2)

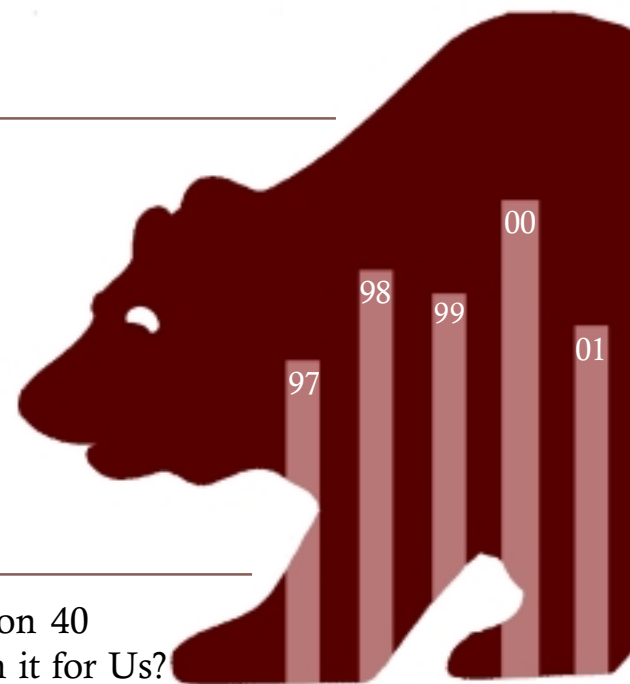
Proposition 40 What's in it for Us?

The March 2002 ballot will contain The California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Act – which would provide \$2.6 billion in state bonds to purchase, protect, and preserve park, coastal, and agricultural lands.

A recent survey by the Public Policy Institute of California shows that 74% of those surveyed are planning to vote "YES" on Prop. 40, with 18% voting "NO" and 8% undecided. In keeping with history, bond acts are a critical source of funds for parks because, as the study also shows, while most people favor using taxpayer money to purchase land to keep it from development, they oppose raising taxes in order to do so.¹

If the bond act passes, what will it mean for California State Parks? While the 2000 bond act provided approximately \$550 million to the Department of Parks and Recreation for acquisition and development projects, this act provides only \$225 million for those purposes.

On the other hand, local parks receive \$832 million as compared to \$824.5 million in the 2000 bond. These grant funds will continue to be administered through DPR, although some projects will be identified by the legislature. This will keep our Department's Office of Grants and Local Assistance busy for years to
(continued on page 2)



(Master Plan - continued)

attitudes towards parks and recreation. The survey will provide a better understanding of the public's activity needs, preferences and interests. It will also study factors affecting recreation activities statewide (for example, demographic and technological trends) and the anticipated impact of various potential actions on how the public uses and perceives parks and recreation. The issues and actions assessment and the public opinions and attitudes survey are scheduled for completion in December 2002.

To request a brochure that describes the planning process, or to provide comments or suggestions, contact:

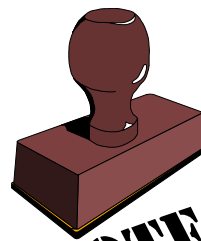
Dave Cox dc Cox@parks.ca.gov or

Eric Natti enatti@parks.ca.gov . 

(Prop. 40 - Continued)

come. Historical and cultural resources will also be protected through funding totaling \$267.5 million.

Another \$1.275 billion will go to Land, Air and Water Conservation—including \$445 million to state conservancies, \$300 million to the Wildlife Conservation Board, and \$375 to the protection of water resources. For more detailed information on Prop. 40, visit www.voteyeson40.org



¹Copies of the report are available at www.ppica.org. 

VOTE March 5, 2002


The Centrifugal Society

In his cleverly titled book Bowling Alone, Harvard sociologist Robert Putnam swamps the reader with overwhelming (and depressing) evidence of the substantial, long-term withdrawal of Americans from meaningful civic involvement and integrated community life. Mountains of data on many factors, from voting in elections and membership (and leadership) in civic organizations on the one hand, to movie-going and dining with friends on the other, show the average American to be less engaged with his fellow citizens with every passing year. Putnam's research demonstrates a high level of civic involvement from the days of the great depression through WWII, and its steady decline since the mid-60's.

The author labels structured and sustained interactive and interpersonal civic involvement as "social capital" (as contrasted to "human capital", the skills and talents of individuals). He considers it to be a glue that is essential to hold a democratic society together, to allow it to flourish, and to provide a rich experience for its citizens. It is essential for the development of

understanding and tolerance among individuals and groups. He finds that this societal glue is eroding, much to the detriment of us all.

Putnam sees a number of causes behind the decline of our nation's social capital. Most important among them are the ever-increasing time which individuals seemingly must invest in their work and in commuting to work. Also critical are vast amounts of personal time spent watching television and involving oneself excessively with the Internet, the first being passive and the second being socially isolating. Unfortunately, Putnam's book (now in paperback) offers only modest recommendations and hopes for imminent changes in the trends he talks about.

It appears that the State Park System is already at work helping to build "social capital" through its many programs and special events. Interpretive programs such as talks, tours and campfire programs provide visitors and students with interactive experiences. And the Volunteers in Parks Program offers limitless opportunities to cultivate civic involvement and to engage the public in healthy interaction. 

Which Parks and Why?

Here are six more questions, the answers to which are the names of one or more units of the California State Park System. The following questions focus on matters relating to natural and cultural resources.

Which unit or units:

1. Can be most closely associated with camels?
2. Will grow in size each spring and shrink down each winter?
3. Have been named after a person who lived two thousand years ago?
4. Will never have a dry spot, even in the best of weather?
5. Contain a number of nearly-spherical geologic formations?
6. Features the only Alta California mission not located on El Camino Real?

(Answers on Page 7)



New Terms

A speaker at a recent meeting of California Resources Agency Directors and Executive Staff cited three terms for the new trend of locating estate-sized homes in or near prime resource locations, particularly along California's coast: Trophy Homes, Prairie Mansions and, perhaps the most graphic, Starter Castles!

Wetlands, Boomburbs and Sprawl Density

The federal government is falling far short of meeting its goal of "no net loss" of wetlands, according to a recent study from the National Academies of Science. The loss in the 48 contiguous states has decreased during the 1986-1997 period, about 58,000 acres was lost every year. The report found that many mitigation projects are not implemented after the development is approved, that some new wetlands are not maintained as promised, and that some projects do not adequately replicate a natural system. As we know, natural features and systems are highly desirable aspects of most park and recreation areas.

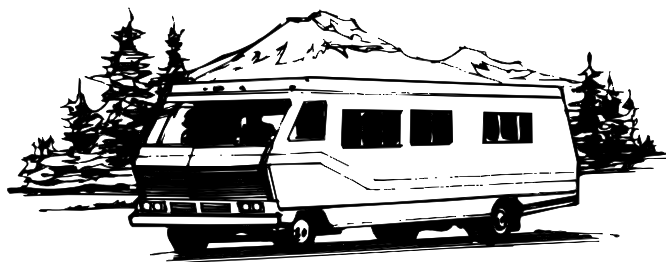
Fannie Mae has identified a new species of urban development, a "boomburb." This is an area with more than 100,000 residents that has maintained double-digit population growth in recent decades and is not the largest city in its metropolitan area. Of the nation's 53 boomburbs, 25 are in California! Included are the cities of Anaheim, Chula Vista, Riverside and Santa Ana. Boomburbs are characterized by extreme degrees of development-related problems, such as traffic congestion and strained public services, which certainly includes parks and recreation lands and facilities.

A recent Brookings Institute Study reports that the sprawl experienced in the East, Midwest and South is more severe than that in California. If this conclusion is counter-intuitive, consider the metropolitan edge instead of the urban core. In the east, there is substantial density at the core, but the edge is an endless parade of 5- and 10 acre lots. In California, projects at the edge are mostly built as the familiar 6 to 8 units per acre. Sixty miles from New York City, you get a cheaper house on a big lot. Sixty miles from downtown Los Angeles you get a cheaper house on the same size lot. 🐘

*Source—California Planning & Development Report, August 2001

Camping Study

From RV Alliance America
(the RV Insurance Specialists)




An article in the spring 2001 newsletter *Inches to Miles* explored "Camping at a Crossroads" and the influence of 78 million Baby Boomers on the camping industry over the next decade. "Of great concern is that the pace of change in recreation offerings at campgrounds across America will not keep up with the lifestyle demands of the active Baby Boomer."

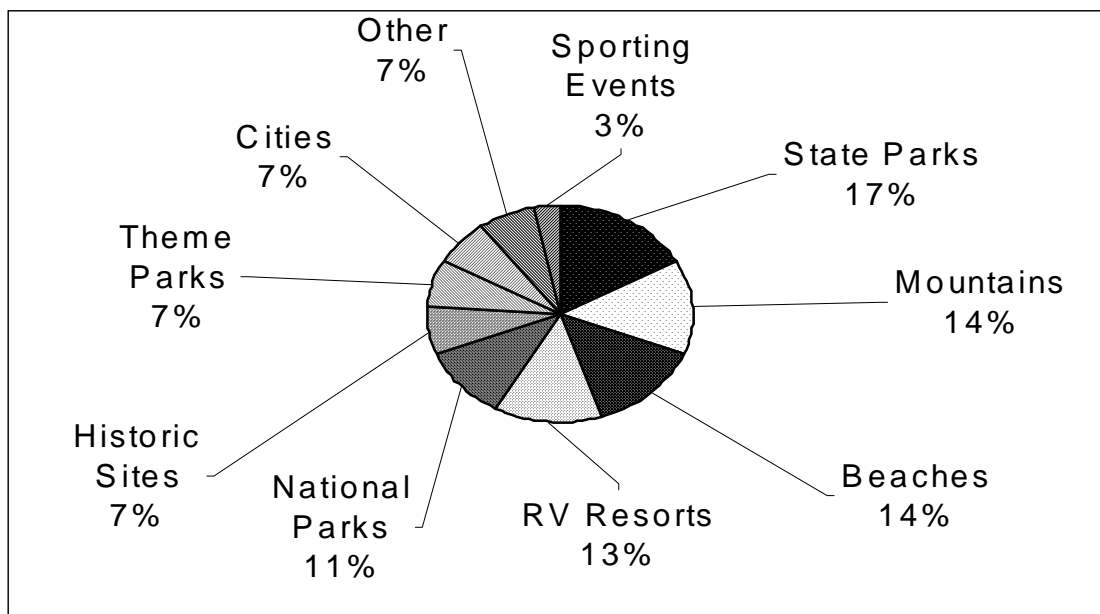
The article claims that Americans over the age of 55 spend 80% of all vacation dollars. As a publication of RV Alliance America, the article addresses concerns about changing demographics. Soon RVers may not be primarily retired citizens on extended vacations, but Boomers taking weekend trips. Their data shows that sporting activities and youth programs are a major consideration and that RVers overall own more recreational equipment than non-RV owners. "While shopping, sightseeing and visiting family rank high for all RVers, 70% of younger Boomers enjoy increased physical recreation such as boating, swimming and motorcycling."

Their study shows that people ages 35-44 have a stronger preference for state parks, while those over 55 prefer national parks and private RV parks.

The draft State Park System Plan currently under review calls for an increase in the number of campsites, from a current inventory of approximately 13,500, to a goal of having 20,000 campsites of various types (family, group, RV with hookups, etc.) by the year 2020. In order to achieve this goal, each year the SPS must add 325 campsites. As reported in the October issue of BEAR FACTS, the SPS had a net gain of only 271 campsites in the last decade.

The SPS must seek the funding for campsite development if it is to address the growing demand of RVers and other campers. This increase must also be supported by an increase in maintenance funding and staff. 

The Destination Choices of RVers - Source RVIA 2000



California Recreational Trails Plan

Public (and DPR staff) comments made regarding the Draft California Recreational Trails Plan have been responded to, and as appropriate incorporated into the revised Plan. The Recreational Trails Committee, as part of their public hearing held January 15th at Asilomar, addressed the Trails Plan revisions, heard additional public comments, and made its recommendation for approval of the plan to the Director of State Parks. Now that it is approved, the Statewide Trails Office staff begins work on identifying a timeline for implementing the action guidelines of the plan's 12 goals—and work begins on the next, more detailed statewide trails plan.

California Trails and Greenways Conference

The annual state Trails and Greenways Conference is being planned for September 6-8, 2002 at Lake Tahoe. Paula David, the conference coordinator for the Statewide Trails Office is continuing her search for ideas for speakers, presentations and sponsors. Any thoughts (and volunteers) are welcome. Contact her at (916) 651-6915 or pdavi@parks.ca.gov.

California Trail Days 2002 will be held the weekend of April 20-21, coinciding with Earth Day. Any organization interested in participating should contact: California Trails Foundation, PO Box 73602, Davis, CA 95617 (email: califtrailsfdn@urcad.org).




Trends in Horse Feed and More . . . *Federal Policy in Action*

A national policy requires the US Forest Service, its employees, and its contractors to use certified weed-free hay, straw (mostly used for feeding horses) and mulch products. In keeping with that policy, Region 5 of the USFS has begun fulfilling the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for a policy requiring the use of certified weed-free hay and straw on California national forest lands.

In June, Regional Forester Bradley Powell issued a memorandum explaining that the Region is currently working with the State of California, the Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service to help slow the spread of noxious weeds by requiring the use of certified weed-free forage and straw. The memorandum states that all new and amended contracts and permits will include clauses requiring the use of certified weed-free hay and straw products, although exceptions may be granted by the authorizing USFS officer if weed-free products are not available.

Several neighboring states and USFS Regions have already enacted weed-free policies. Several agencies including USFS, BLM, NPS, CDFA and DPR have agreed to pool funds to hire a coordinator to help educate their constituencies about weed-free issue, and to develop a bigger product market. DPR's Natural Resources Division and Statewide Trails Program are following developments regarding the weed-free forage and mulch issue. More information is available at <http://pi.cdfa.ca.gov/weed/wff/> and <http://pi.cdfa.ca.gov/weed/wff/finalcert.htm>.

The Park, Planning and Policy Committee is considering whether DPR should adopt a policy in line with the Federal government. For more information, contact Paula David at (916) 651-6915 or pdavi@parks.ca.gov. 

Forest Service Visitor Studies

Since the late 1980's the U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Southwest Research Station has actively been measuring outdoor recreation visitor profiles, recreation patterns, beliefs, development preferences, communication tools and preferences and beliefs about depreciative behaviors. Deborah Chavez, Ph.D. produced a compilation of these studies entitled *Managing Outdoor Recreation in California: Visitor Contact Studies and Trends 1989-1998*. This series of recreation contact studies were conducted at various outdoor recreation sites in California, primarily in Southern California.

It is significant that while in some cases there was a relatively small sample size for underrepresented groups, they offered information and trends that had not been previously captured. They also reflected the fact that visitation from these groups was low. The information and trends that were researched and defined may be nothing new to the managers—there has been an increase in visitation from Hispanic and Asian groups that makes sense given population trends. The important question is “How can we use this information to manage parks that we operate?”

It is also important to understand that visitors who were studied are somewhat familiar with US Forest Service resources and facilities. They may not necessarily represent the larger community that the State Park System and other agencies want to reach. Remember that not all Hispanics have the same expectations—there are differences in cultures, ages and traditions that segment this visitor group. The research shows that broad stereotypes do not apply.

Over the course of the ten or more years of studies there were several trends that were significant to include:

- Many respondents were from urban areas in search of a place to relieve stress
- Respondents selected sites based on fa-

miliarity and a sense of it offering a good family experience

- The sizes of groups were either moderate (8-9 persons) to larger extended families (up to 20 or more). In most of the studies the facilities did not accommodate either size group.

Other salient trends included:

- Visitors shared their experiences with others
- They enjoyed (for the most part) contact with local park staff.

Communication and communication tools were another area of study that resulted in trends that suggest a need to direct or consider techniques and patterns that fit a specific user group and not a general population. It was probably more useful to take information to individuals or sites than to expect the visitor to seek out information. This also allowed more interpersonal on-site contacts. Clearly written information needs to be offered in English and Spanish as well as in other languages of groups who frequent outdoor recreation sites.

The management of natural resources has been geared toward a rural Anglo population that has typically made up the largest group of visitors and most often are the most vocal proponents of outdoor recreation resources. However, California has seen a trend of increasing use from urban areas and people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The growth in racial and ethnic populations is expected to continue to the point that Hispanics are estimated to make up from 30% to 48% of the California population by the year 2040. Park managers must shift from a focus on the traditional target audience to more diverse, younger, urban visitors.

For more information about research conducted by the U.S. Forest Service, see the website of the Pacific Southwest Research Station at www.psw.fs.fed.us.





Technical Assistance News: Updated Access to Parks Guidelines Now Available



Park and recreation providers have a complex challenge when it comes to interpreting and applying laws about accessibility for people with disabilities. A major difficulty has been a lack of clearly defined regulations and standards for recreational facilities such

as picnic areas, campgrounds and boating facilities.

California State Parks began tackling this problem and published *Access to Parks Guidelines* (ATPG) in 1994. The most recent revision has been updated to include all changes in state and federal laws for access compliance, including the proposed federal outdoor regulations. These regulations include standards for a wide variety of recreational facilities. Many chapters of ATPG have been revised to provide clearer facility specifications.

Access to Parks Guidelines is the reference used for reviewing accessibility compliance for both State Park System projects and projects proposed by organizations seeking grants through the Office of Grants and Local Assistance.

To receive a copy, call the Accessibility Section of Acquisition and Development at (916) 445-8949 or FAX your request to (916) 445-8966.



Answers and Explanations for “Which Park and Why” on page 3

1. Fort Tejon SHP and Anza-Borrego Desert SP. The fort was one of the sites of Secretary of War Jefferson Davis’ experiment in using camels as beasts of burden in the arid west. The US Army had more than two dozen camels housed here in the winter of 1859-60. Also, fossil remains of at least two genera of prehistoric, now extinct, camels have been found at Anza-Borrego.

2. Mono Lake Tufa SR. The bulk of state ownership at this unit is the land which underlies the lake’s surface. This area, and thus the park itself, becomes larger as the lake grows in size with the spring snowmelt and runoff, and then shrinks during the summer and autumn due to water evaporation.

3. San Juan Bautista SHP and San Mateo SB. Both individuals lived at the time of Christ, two thousand years ago. John the Baptist baptized Christ and Saint Matthew was one of the twelve disciples.

4. Point Arena Rock NP. Located off the coast of and an integral part (as an “internal unit”) of Manchester SB, no part of this “wash rock” is ever dry, even in clear weather, in a calm sea, and at the lowest of tides.

5. Schooner Gulch SB and Ocotillo Wells SVRA. These nearly-spherical formations are the so-called bowling balls at the first-named unit’s Bowling Ball Beach, and the fancifully named pumpkins of the “Pumpkin Patch” in the latter unit. Such concretions form and grow in underwater environments when materials collect around a nucleus and they are moved around by water action.

6. Sonoma Mission SHP. Completed after Mexico gained its independence from Spain, the last in the series of missions in Alta California was built on the region’s principal north-south route of travel, for which the name El Camino Federal had replaced the former name El Camino Real.

Bear Facts

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Were (Nearly) the Tops!

Comparing six important aspects of California's State Park System in FY 00/01 with the same factors in the nation's other 49 states, we come out first in three and second in the other three. This reflects the importance of parks to California, its citizens and their outdoor lifestyle.

#1 in **Attendance:** The SPS's 93,062,481 visitors are 80% more than #2, New York.

#1 in **Overnight Use:** The SPS's 5,467,260 campers edged out #2, Michigan.

#1 in **Support Groups:** The SPS's 82 support groups (cooperating associations) give us lots of help, Florida is #2.

#2 in **Acreage:** The SPS's total of 1,412,825 acres is second only to Alaska's giant system.

#2 in **Revenue Generated:** The SPS's \$54,926,371. compares to New York, which generates 20% more.

#2 in **Total Staff:** The SPS's 5091 total of permanent and seasonal staff was less than #1, New York.

From the Annual Report of National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD).

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